

The Helpers

Cesar Kiraly

§ This text, this criticism, repeats itself. It is somewhat made of escapes of what can be uncomfortable and thus resides in it. This cannot be understood solely in a negative way. For such willingness to listen has allowed us to see what would be most relevant to a set of doubts, as well remake the path that exposes certain unjustifiable innocent implicit beliefs regarding certain practices. To listen never lets us down. Hence the traffic of helplessness always crosses that of politics, not always looking both ways before crossing.

§ There are two videos, a series of photos, and another of sculptures. The first causes a small illusion about proportions, making a white room in the shape of a cube, inside another, to be taken first by colored cutouts, and later by dark material. This white cube serves as a reference to places that have this format, such as an art gallery, for example, but also as a artifice to understand the spaces. *The Direction is an Empty Center, All There is are Surrounding* names and indicates the direction and the reason of movement. *The Helpers* is less abstract. In it we see a forest inhabited by creatures that become noticeable under light of clearings. They are quite unique beings, whose figures resemble the human form. The feeling experienced by the beholder is to be surrounded by these strangers. The photographs and sculptures dialogue more directly with this second video. The sculptures are nothing more than redone molds from entities that inhabit it. The idea is to show that even revealing the shells of which came the strange beings that surround us, it would not exhaust the perversion they represent. This is the power that the work holds. *Appearance*, the photographic series, reveals versions of materials in the dark. In part, they are the result of the research that Sara has been doing on the adaptation of the eyes in poorly lit rooms filled with objects. This practice began in the artist's exhibition *Penumbra* at Eva Klabin Foundation and developed in *Sleeplessness and Trace* in Matadero (Madrid) and Centre d'art la panera (Lleida). As the sculptures, they can be viewed as fragments of perversion. The general sense of this individual can be described as questioning of the usual relationship with the presences that surround us. Especially, those on whom we depend but do not notice. It is as if the artist could say that we are always under the care of strangers. She makes us recognize that the circumstances around us depend on a sensitivity that is at the same time formal and social. In the formal level, as it has been said, the frameworks surround us, and in the social, the virtue we can hold comes from the judgment of those beings surround us, those that politics causes to disappear when the day comes, when the light is lit. It can be said that this exhibition addresses the sociability and politics, without using explicitly agreed resources as owners of such properties. Or, further, that the main issues relating to politics need to be addressed incidentally from their social assumptions.

§ Sara operates with the form, or forms, and the character. Not only, she also covers the connection of a thing within another. Regarding the form she does so in the video that explains about the cube outlines, after black and color storm, as an initial step, about the direction taken by the stroke. The strength of the forms goes to a center, but it is empty. In the edges, surroundings. If it does no fit, it spills. It is emblematic that there is the effort to also compose with the characters. If she approached them solely, it would be the case to say where they are going. Having been placed as neighbors of the form, the intention is clearer. They do not go nowhere, they just move. They are familiar creatures, without history, if they practice any residual drama, whatever, but close to the cube, they resist such a path. They are pieces that have accompanied the artist for some time, in many ways, now walking, and now inhabit the penumbra in which our eyes have been formed. They are beings possibly watched in the dark. Intuition is now passing between clearings. There is a touch of helplessness, of being lost in the world under the care of strangers, not in some form of lost idyll, but with all the intrinsic disturbance load of an unknown place. The helplessness is an upgradeable point in life when we experience the pain of polymorphous perversion in its sweet freedom. If the repression of a terrible variety of sensations is common practice, those of when we see shapes in the dark, here it is proposed to us to immerse into the dark state in which the desires pass through the body without hierarchy. In the work there is no availability for the indirect narratives made of relevant dates and fantasies, such as the repeated receptions to historical events. The bridge between the abstract and the characters who resist the drama is made of the combination of photographs and sculptural artifacts removed from the penumbra. They are inspections of the adaptation of the eye to different light effects on such familiar forms that do not give in to allegories. Yes, of

polymorphous perversion written in its residence, the dark. If the forms are lit, the revelation will be of its negatives. A local form that inhabits the arid side of the imagination can not be deciphered but with its reverse. For this, we have sculptures with particular cuts, as irregular as the pictures of the secret life of polymorphous sensations. Those that just for giving an adequate explanation are urgently silenced.

§ In *The Helpers*, Sara shows a wise and curious relationship between abandonment and perception. As Benoît Mandelbrot told us, the indians were not able to see the tall ship approaching for the first time, because his eyes were not used to seeing the boat on the horizon, where they would be somewhat blind to this object. Of course we would not be able to see the creatures around us. It would take the watch of the back and forth, to have the eyes prepared to see movement. We would see these forms in the dark after we were used to them, after realization with the aid of light. Here lies the problem with the fact that the light on or off is not the same thing. Faced with the lights off, we have a creature in the dark. Before the light, we have to be part of something that can be a creature but also cannot be. In the dark we do not have the impression of a creature from the part of something, there is actually someone there to help us. That someone disappears in the light, things are made so you cannot be in it.

§ We all know the epithet repeated by Mario Pedrosa on the fact that the art is the experimental exercise of freedom. As every good sentence, it could and can be interpreted in many ways. It seems that Pedrosa meant that art could invent new powers for freedom, as well as new practices themselves in a contiguous society environment such as a laboratory, so that the good experiments of freedom could be used and the bad discarded, as experiments gone wrong. At the same time, the art could show society what it could be, positive and negative, but it is not. The virtuous element of way of thinking of Pedrosa points to the clear political nature of artistic practice in all fields, whether formal or referential, since freedom is political, even in the existential sense, as we all know. The vicious element, merely residual, is that art is understood as taking something apart in an experiment design of something scientific, according to which the experiment would actually function as truth that is higher than the experience. As such, the freedom of the art experiment would be a possible freedom, not freedom itself. The art of political nature would be possible not present. Then there would be a small lie in the way artists would make politics. But why? Pedrosa might think that the extreme freedom of artists that would make the m experimenters of freedom, would also bring the need for those experiments to be filtered. In other words, there would be something possibly relevant in the politics of artists, but not always.

§ We could, however, bring the Pedrosa theme to other places, from objections he would probably use to reshape his argument. Well, the experimentalism of art is not distinguished or separates from the experience, they are inseparable, the use of two words, though resembled, in this context, is nothing more than the establishment of a meaningless alibi. This means that the activity of the freedom of the artist at all times is the exercise of the risk and responsibility inherent to the actions. Art is the experimental experience of freedom in a way that is indistinguishable from current freedom, in fact, the artist, like everyone else, disputes for it.

§ Experience, as we all suspect, is an open and complex texture. Nothing is left out. The more disguised and hidden from our actions, even the unconscious, they are in it. It would be strange to think that politics has the same dimension of experience. However, we also suspect when something is said not political. What happens? It seems that all experiments can be political, although they are not all the time. The same act can be political and not political at the same time. Thus, questions about what is politics, or when is politics. The ontology of politics is temporal. Hence, Hegel on vacation or not, intuitively we do not let go of the umbrella.

§ So art can be as political as the other experiences or even more political than they are. As temporal as they are, political events can be distinguished by the intensity. It is in that direction that it makes sense to say that an event was more political than others. Then when is politics? The rapid response, partially correct, I would say that it is when it is instituted. Well, all that endures in experience is instituted, so could it be that this form is a little too wide? Politics is when the institution is restrictive, when it promotes constricting results in the intimate level. The way it does so is the pain. Politics is when the pain is established in time. The policy is when we are facing cruelty, in most cases, without us knowing.

§ Having said so, it seems terrible, mainly since we place in the operative capacity of politics our improvement agencies of the world. The opposition between cruelty and virtue is apparent. Because we would quickly admit that a conception of the world is best and it conflicts with others who consider themselves even better and the circumstantial effect of virtue derives from the ability to put in place popular routes in the best of worlds, and to

pose restriction to all others. As good as a world, as plural it could be, it is marked on your notebook all the debts of all worlds truly desired which it is not.

§ If art is an especially intense experience of freedom, if its experimental practice greatly affects, with no alibi, social life, contemporary art, in particular, deepens the process. Among other reasons, due to its ability to transfigure ordinary objects into other things, especially into works of art. However the most important for politics in its dynamics of sociability, is not really the result of transfiguration, but the operation itself, the process. The dynamics need not be as radical as the passage of the soap powder box or the can of soup. In fact it is good that it is not because these extreme examples were hypnotizing due to their novelty, not without reason. The contemporary artist is capable of operations of conceptual pictoriality, according to which we see the image of nature where it was previously ignored. Certainly, the mechanism has become more sophisticated and the pictorial operation is also used with subtlety by inserting small fractures in circumstances which pictoriality was ignored by us. Why is any of this related to political freedom? Because political freedom has to do with phenomena that prevails precisely for its ability to not be seen.

§ The political institution exists in processes of opacity. In order to stabilize itself, it is dependent on social habits, repetitions, and other phenomena, but as there is specificity in political experience, what repeats in time is the constraint. One can deduce that it is strong, so that in crystallized states, we do not even realize it is there. In that the cruelty deepens. The great thing is that the political institution assumes this opacity, without which the unpredictability would exceed the predictability. It is therefore up to the experimental exercise of freedom to reverse, not without risk, this apparent invisibility. Contemporary art when it focuses on politics, directly or indirectly, from their operators afford to be seen as an image and make what can be perceived politics. If not seeing stabilizes the world and deepens cruelty, to see decreases it, sometimes to the point of suppressing it. Changing the scope of the image, inserting a fracture therein, allows it to be seen as such, in addition to the effects of opacity and repetition.

§ Often such pictorial operation is performed explicitly, making themes of images of conflict, violence, death etc. In other reassembles under devices, feelings referred to historical events worthy of shame or recognition. It is about overcoming obstacles that hinder appropriate cinnamon is kicked. On the other hand, there is no reason to be explicit. Because what begins as movement of objects between materiality statutes and deepens as fracture in the image, evidence that it is image, it may be only a dissonance in expectations (as when a body carries out a maneuver contrary to its anatomy, depression glazing a situation an accident aestheticized the viscera etc.) or the lively replacement of a formal nature issues. Thus, there are two ways roughly contemporary art, which obviously are not mutually exclusive, to institute politically or she performs a pictorial object that happens to inhabit the public sphere in restricting to something (preferably in restricting the bad thing) in such a way that its meaning deepen or she exposes dynamic from which a restriction occurs. The exclusion is not clear, because the institution in the conflict, and clarifies something that establishing a perspective.

§ The Helpers is a political exposure predominantly in this second sense. Sara with it displaces grating, as it is customary, and gently some senses, so that a dynamic remains exposed. This is to make explicit certain depth of the relationship with the other, at first, and then thicken the breath towards a complete fragmentation. The route begins and ends at the hub shattering of the setting and the characters.

§ There is a way of thinking based on the contradiction. One says one thing and another says another, pointing out the flaws of the previous points and the new path, this is the game and artists also engage with it. One says one thing; no, that's not it, is it, or even a little of this, a little of that too. Now they all do. Where is the contradiction? She gives it impossible to realize the artificiality of this dynamic. In taking it as true. As the only path required for something. Contemporary art, as skeptics before it, acts by composition. In contradiction, the arguments are involved and cooled at the meeting of the vicious circle. In the composition, the problem lies elsewhere. It is therefore to find how the phenomena are mounted. Cubes, lines and dots populate the imagination by contradiction and composition. In this second, however, they have very particular sense. They are found by decomposition, reduction, etc. If cubes, lines and dots are said to abstract such, the composition, it should be just one use, because they are the same elements of concreteness, materiality.

§ The cubes of Sara, perceived as metaphors or allegories, lose all force applicable to family composition. In this sense they are a didactic drama of resistance. Not to tell something, or do it in its concreteness, it is the way to remain in the composition. The form is dirty too, it drops pieces, it is full of dirt. There are people in the form, one is

made of it. In it one opens the door with fingers still stained with paint. For this reason one can say that the form is political, because it is made of the same gross earthy mixture of the world.

§ There is a well known popular American song, originated from the context of domination of whites over blacks in which the is heard the repetition of "sometimes I feel like a motherless child." It is a very sad and religious melody that inevitably leads to helplessness. Authorship is ignored, it there is a number of versions. Noteworthy, are those of Bessie Griffin, densely related to the gospel environment and, still in the religious context the decided and phantasmagorical version of Paul Robson, with his bass voice, there is also that of Louis Armstrong with an interlocutor between repetitions, about the meaning and the weight of life. Escapes a little to the religious universe the sophisticated arrangement and jazzy interpretation of Jimmy Scottt and the invigorating and hectic tune by Kathleen Emery. The latter, though it cannot unlink the slavery of the song, gives it something of a widespread helplessness, perhaps due to the bourgeois touch that it adds. Why is this song relevant? Because of the lyrics solution to the question of helplessness that arises from political domination. While referring to the historical wound, it is not dependent on it. Uses it as a plan from which it comes, granting almost inevitable optimism to the precariousness of experience. "Sometimes I feel", in other times I don't. The helplessness is the most mature of moral sentiments, when taken in its instability.

§ Helplessness is the machine that produces creatures. The dark places that it inhabits give them a particular structure. The creatures are familiar to us, since they are available to every any perspective. Because everything is surrounding, to no one it is refused the possibility of being creature to someone and to be gone when the lights turn on. It is intrinsic to family to provide security, but also to be denied or forgotten, because it is so common. Like music, the creatures are surroundings, they circulate. The creatures of Sara resist to drama to not be disempowered, to avoid being sucked into the melodrama. Only then you can see the movement of the cruel: nor heavier or lighter, nor bitter or sweeter. to be made creature is to be marked with a difference, to be gently put to disappear. No plot, no staging. That is what populations do while we see them as creatures, they circulate until they are put to ever exist.

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Translated from Portuguese by Paula Pimenta.